Decrease in PLF of Thermal Power Plants in the country

993. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the thermal capacity at present constitutes about 68.70 per cent of the total installed capacity in the country and contributes about 72.82 per cent of the total power generation;

(b) whether it is also a fact that during 1988-89 the PLF was 55 per cent as compared to 56.5 per cent of the previous year *i.e.* 1987-88, if so, what are the reasons for decrease in PLF, indicating the percentage of PLF during 1989-90 and during April, 1990 to March, 1991;

(c) whether it is a fact that in the private sector PLF during 1990-91 was 67.4 epr cent wheres in Central Sector the All India average was of 53.8 per cent during April, 1990 to March, 1991; and

(d) if so what positive measures Government have taken or propose to take to achieve the optimum utilisation of he existing thermal units in the country and to increase the PLF during 1991-92?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINSTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) The thermal capacity at present is about 69.42 per cent of the total installed capacity in the country and contributes about 70.30 per cent of the total energy generation during April—August, 1991.

(b) There was a severe drought in the country during 1987-88 and to meet the requirement of power, the thermal power stations had to generate more power. The planned maintenance of the plants was postponed. During 1988-89, there was good monsoon and consequent excess hydro generation and less irrigation requirement c power. It was on account of thi reason that Plant Load Factor c thermal plants during 1987-88 wa higher than during 1988-89.

The thermal Plant Load Factor c 1989-90 and 1990-91 is 56.5 per cer and 55.8 per cent respectively.

(c) The Plant Load Factor of tota private sector and total central sectc during 1990-91 is 58.4 per cent an 58.1 per cent respectively. All Indi average Plant Load Factor is 53.8 pe cent during 1990-91.

(d) Various measures being take for optimum utilisation of installe capacity include (i) Renovation an Modernistion of old units, (ii) assist ance to Electricity Boards in under taking plant betterment programme (iii) supply of requisite quantity an quality of coal, (iv) training of Oper ating and Monitoring personnel, anc (v) strengthening of transmission anc distribution systems.

Development of Buddhist Pilgrim Centres

994. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased tc state:

(a) whether the Department o Tourism has prepared any actior plan for the improvement of Bud dhist-Pilgrimage Centres in Orissa Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in collaboration with the Archaeological Survey of India;

(b) if so, what are the details of facilities likely to be provided on the National State Highways to the tourists;

(c) what is the total amount o assistance so far been provided for this purpose by the Overseas Economic Corporation Fund of Japan; and

(d) what are the other Buddhist Centres identified by the Task Force

II besides in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and what steps Government propose to take to strengthen the tourist infrastructure at such centres-

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): (a) Based on the recommendations of the 1st Task Force, which had a representative from Archaeological Survey of India, a project to develop places of Buddhist importance in the States of U.P. and Bihar is being executed with the assistance of Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund of Japan.

(b) Under this project wayside facilities have been sanctioned at Doherighat and Gazipur in U.P. and a wayside facility at Hiswa in Bihar is proposed.

(c) Reimbursement claims amounting to Rs. 14.32 crores have been sent to Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund of Japan which are under consideration.

(d) The Second Task Force identified 53 Buddhist Centres in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, J&K., Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim and Tamil Nadu for phased development. Central Department of Tourism would consider extending assistance to the concerned State Governments. On receipt of specific proposals and dependent upon their merits, availability of funds and *inter-se* priority.

Incentives for development of Equipments based on Solar Energy

995. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that over 100 million families are presently using firewood in rural households, which represents a major share of energy used in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what incentives Government are giving for R & D efforts for development of equipments based on solar energy and also what fiscal incentives are being offered for commercial production of such equipment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) and (b) It is estimated that around 150 million households in rural areas will be using fire wood in the year 2000 for cooking and heating applications.

(c) R and D efforts for development of equipments based on solar energy are being carried out by various institutes, universities, laboratories etc. Financial support is provided by the Government for taking up R & D activities.

Fiscal incentives, like 100 per cent rate of depreciation under the Income Tax Act, exemption from Industrial Licensing, relief in Customs duty, exemption from Central excise are available to the manufacturers for commercial production of solar equipments. Sales Tax exemption reduction has also been allowed on solar energy equipments devices by some of the manufacturers.

Some of the solar thermal equipments|devices are provided to the consumers under cost sharing (subsidy) scheme by the Government.

Appointment of Inquiry Commission on working of Coal India Limited

996. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether several associations, organisations and individuals have urged the Central Government to